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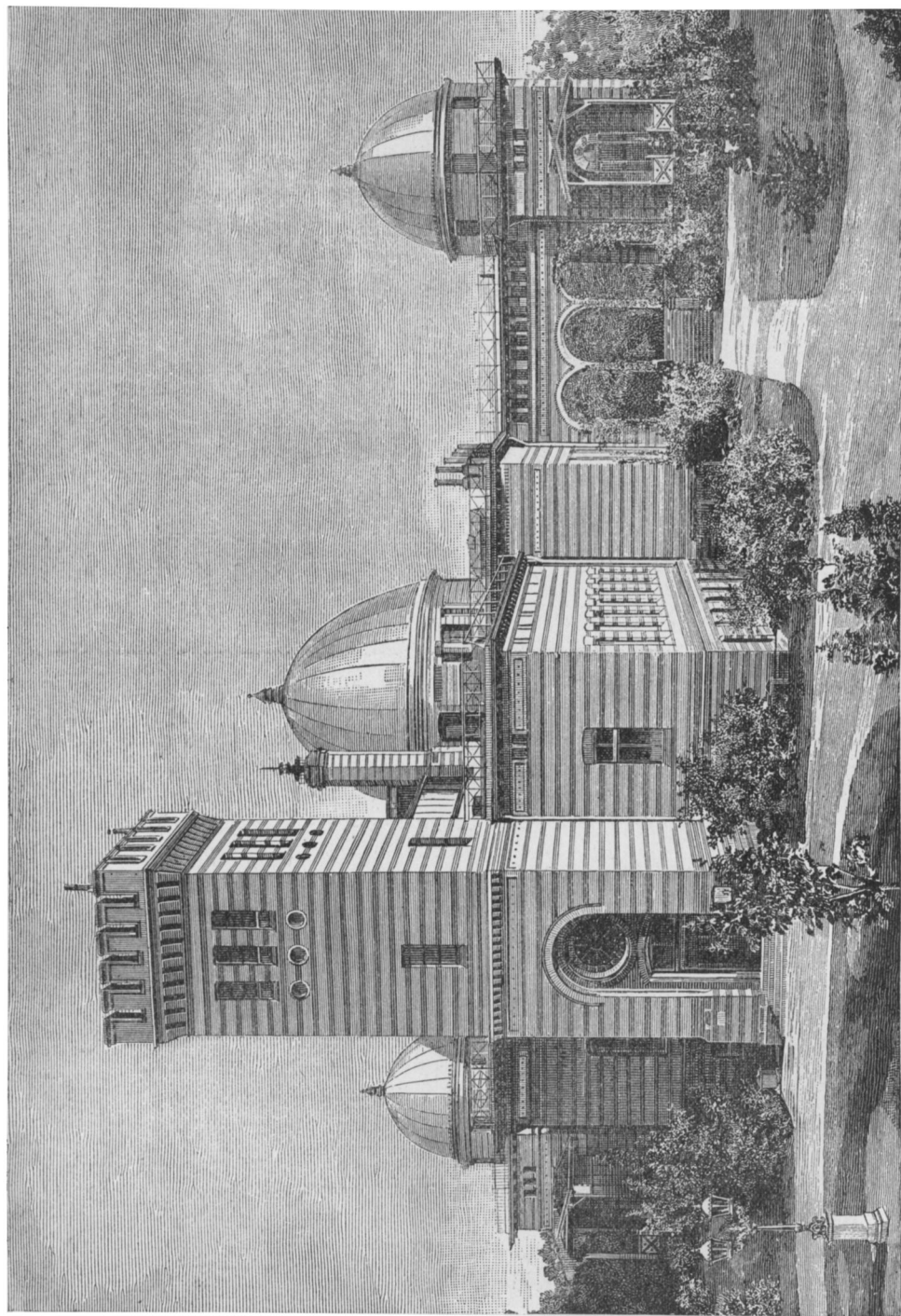
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THE OBSERVATORY OF POTSDAM.



## NOTICES FROM THE LICK OBSERVATORY.

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PREPARED BY MEMBERS OF THE STAFF.

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### THE NATIONAL OBSERVATORY OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

In 1870 Dr. B. A. GOULD arrived at Cordoba, in the Argentine Republic, bringing with him some of the appliances necessary for the establishment of the National Observatory.

Owing to delays of various kinds, many of which were due to the Franco-German war of 1870, the meridian circle was not in position till 1872. The two years, 1870-72, were spent—and well spent—in the formation of the *Uranometria Argentina*, which shows the brightness and position of every star visible to the naked eye in the southern heavens; that is in about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the whole sky.

This work was done by Messrs. THOME, ROCK, DAVIS and HATHAWAY under the direction of Dr. GOULD and according to plans which he had matured since 1858. The scale of magnitudes adopted was the same as that employed by ARGELANDER in making his *Uranometria Nova* (1843) which contains the positions and brightness of all the lucid stars (3256 in number) visible at Bonn. ARGELANDER's faintest star was 6th magnitude. It was found that stars of less than the 7th magnitude could be seen in the clear sky of Cordoba, and in fact the *Uranometria Argentina* contains 8198 stars of the 7th magnitude and brighter, while 2451 stars fainter were observed but have been excluded. Of these 10,649 stars more than 46,000 observations were made. The work was done in the most thorough manner and will remain a classic always. It was published in 1879.

As soon as the meridian circle was installed (1872) it was at once set to the work planned by Dr. GOULD. This was first to form a catalogue of standard stars (32,448 in number) and second to form a catalogue of zone-stars in the regions south of ARGE-

LANDER'S zones and north of the (unpublished) zones of GILLISS, that is in the region  $-31^{\circ}$  to  $-65^{\circ}$  (73,000 stars in all).

This work was completed, so far as observation was concerned, in 1881.

The following observations had then been made:

For the standard catalogue. . . . .	121,000
For zero stars . . . . .	14,000
For stars in the zones . . . . .	105,000
	<hr/> 240,000

About half of these were made by Dr. GOULD himself, assisted by various observers. Dr. THOME took a leading part in this work, also, from the beginning. The catalogue of zone stars was published in the year 1884 and the catalogue of standard stars in 1886.

These three great undertakings were thus brought to a successful termination, and the Cordoba Observatory has given us data for the southern sky which is comparable in amount and in several respects superior in accuracy to the corresponding data for the northern. Besides these principal works, other series of scarcely less value were carried on relating to the observations of comets and asteroids, to the determination of geographical positions, to the observation of variable stars, to the photography of star-clusters, to South American meteorology, etc., etc.

The *results* of the work of the Cordoba Observatory were thus quickly put in the hands of astronomers. The data upon which these results depended were to be printed in the annual volumes. Dr. GOULD resigned his position in 1885 and Dr. THOME was appointed in his place, and the work of publishing these annual volumes fell upon the latter, as well as the carrying out of a plan of Dr. GOULD'S for making a complete *Durchmusterung* of the southern sky, which should contain the position and brightness of every star brighter than the 10th magnitude. These annual volumes have been prepared and the last of them (Vol. XIII) is now in the press. The preface to this volume has just been received and it is printed below, as it marks the termination of what may be called the first period of the activity of this great observatory.

It was founded in 1870 through the active interest of Dr. SARMIENTO, President of the Republic. It has been willingly and generously supported by successive congresses from that time to this. The programme of its work was carefully laid down by

Dr. GOULD and has been loyally followed by Dr. THOME. These gentlemen have been faithfully assisted by many observers, usually North Americans.

Science has no country and the priceless results which have been attained belong to the whole world. Yet it is permissible to rejoice that it is to American astronomers, GILLISS, GOULD, THOME and their assistants, that many of the chief advances in our recent knowledge of the stars of the southern sky are due; and this much can be said while giving the fullest credit to the labors of other astronomers in the southern hemisphere.

The preface written by Dr. THOME follows, and I hope that the work of which it treats will be even better appreciated because of this slight introductory note which I have written.

EDWARD S. HOLDEN.

*Preface to Volume XIII of the Cordoba Observatory Publications.*

By J. M. THOME, Director.

“With the present volume, the publication of the separate determinations made in the years 1872-1880 is completed, and they are now embodied in permanent form, secure against all temporal vicissitudes. This labor has been carried on uninterruptedly for the past six years, during which period seven volumes have appeared. The time and labor required in the revision have been very great, no pains having been spared to secure accuracy in every case of doubt, and I now have reason to believe that, after making the corrections indicated in the lists of errata accompanying each publication, the entire series of fourteen volumes will be found nearly perfect.

It is for me a source of sincere congratulation that I have been able to perform this service. These results were obtained only after many years of rude labor, unflinching energy and vigilance, and it was due that they should be published with loving care. Having been associated with the Observatory from the beginning, occupying the nominal Directorship during the progress of these observations for periods amounting to more than two years, and having contributed a larger part to the formation of these Catalogues than any other assistant, there was no one, probably, who could have so intimate a knowledge of the requirements for their proper publication after Dr. GOULD, to whom they owe their origin.